

March 3, 2016

DETERMINATION OF NO EFFECT

TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS:

Pursuant to the environmental assessment requirements of 31 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 363.14 of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) rules, the Executive Administrator of the TWDB has determined that the proposed action identified below may be exempted from formal environmental review requirements:

City of Austin, Travis County
Direct Reuse Strategy
South Austin Regional WWTP Filtration Project
SWIRFT PIF# 11826

The City of Austin (City) is proposing to seek funding from the State Water Implementation Revenue Fund for Texas (SWIRFT) for the planning, design and construction phases required to rehabilitate and expand the tertiary filtration system at South Austin Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). Specifically, the City plans to: (1) replace the existing aging granular media filters with cloth disk filters; 2) perform piping size modifications to increase treatment capacity; 3) remove blowers; 4) replace the existing 42-inch filter influent pipe with a 54-inch filter influent pipe; 5) demolish the existing concrete floor and installation of a new concrete floor to accommodate the increased filter capacity; and, 6) replace existing mud well pumps including replacement of the discharge piping and installation of a new concrete splitter box. The project will also include erosion control plans, removal of debris and revegetation within the limits of construction. All proposed components would occur within the existing treatment plant facilities.

The final filtration stage, or tertiary filtration, is required in order to comply with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) wastewater discharge and water reuse requirements. The effluent filters at the South Austin Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) serve as the final step in the wastewater treatment process before the effluent is discharged to the Colorado River or reused through the City's water reuse initiative. The proposed project will extend the useful life of the filtration treatment facility at the WWTP and should help the City provide reliable and high quality reclaimed water to meet need of the City's reuse strategy and its growing customer base.

No impacts to state or federally listed protected species or critical habitat, waters of the United States, including wetlands, or cultural resources are expected because the project would occur entirely within the footprint of the existing wastewater treatment plant site.

A desktop review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) (Map Panel ID# 48453C0630K) found that the existing wastewater treatment

facilities and proposed improvements are located in Zone X, which are areas determined to be outside of the 100-year floodplain.

TWDB staff concurs that the proposed project qualifies for a categorical exclusion because the work is functional replacement of the existing filtration system with a minor capacity increase in the existing service area. No permit modifications will be required for this project. All proposed work will be performed on previously disturbed sites. Therefore, environmental impacts should be similar to rehabilitation activities and limited to those associated with excavation and pipe installation.

This decision is allowed because the specified project elements should not entail significant adverse impacts to the quality of the human environment. Documentation supporting this determination is on file at the TWDB. This determination may be rescinded if it is found that:

- (1) because of changes in the project the proposed actions no longer correspond to the description provided above;
- (2) the project may have significant adverse environmental effects; or
- (3) Federal, State, or local laws are being or may be violated by implementation of this project.

The project also must comply with the following standard emergency conditions:

- Standard emergency conditions for the discovery of cultural resources; and,
- Standard emergency conditions for the discovery of threatened and endangered species.

Comments regarding this determination may be submitted to the Director, Regional Water Planning & Development, Texas Water Development Board, P.O. Box 13231, Austin, Texas 78711-3231.

Submitted February 4, 2016

South Austin Regional WWTP Filtration Project – Environmental Review - USGS Map

